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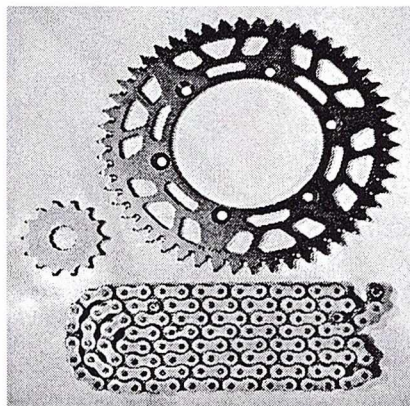
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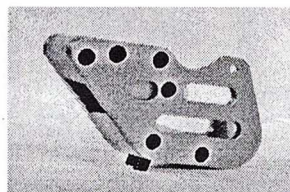


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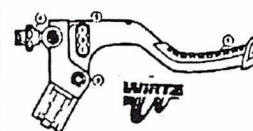
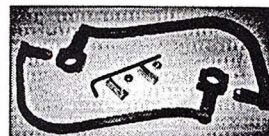
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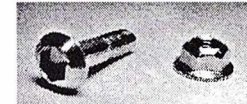
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On the cover: Hammering through the snow in New England can be sweet or seriously difficult, depending on whether it's frozen or soft. This year it was soft for the Snow Run, and though it looks good in this photo, all the riders got their money's worth! Jim Burns is making it look easy on his trusty Husaberg.

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Paul Clipper
Bossman

Mark Uth
Technical Editor

Charlie Williams
National Affairs Editor

Len Nelson
Web Master

Cheri Alix
Mark Baer
Mike Bernier
Denise Bernier
Jay Chittenden
Ed Hertfelder
Joe McLaughlin
Contributors

Editorial and
Subscription Address
P.O. Box 2038
Medford Lakes, NJ 08055
(609)953-2922
Fax (609)953-7223

Web Site
www.trailrider.com
E-Mail Address
trmagazine@prodigy.net

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Warning: We've been writing these disclaimers here for 14 years, and we're hoping you're starting to get the point. We don't want anyone getting hurt, but you have to accept the fact that injuries are a normal part of any extreme sport, and trail riding definitely qualifies as "extreme." What, you want to compare it to baseball or something? Give me a break. Baseball, the worst that can happen is you spill beer all over the front of your shirt and fall off the second level into the stands below. Pansies are into baseball, real men and women ride trail. Do it safe, protect yourself, be careful, and have a ton of fun.

All You Need to Know

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are available from Trail Rider Magazine, P.O. Box 2038, Medford Lakes NJ 08055, at \$18.00 U.S. per 12 issues (one year). Canadian subscriptions are \$30 yearly, in U.S. funds. We're not selling overseas subscriptions any more. We don't have a Visa & Mastercard merchant's account, so we can't sell by credit card, and neither are we set up to "bill you" for a subscription. The only way to get it is send in a check, cash or money order, and we'll do the rest.

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Back Issues: A limited number of back issues are available. Write us and let us know the month and year, and send \$2.95 per copy, plus U.S. Postage of \$3 for up to four magazines. More than four and we'll have to figure out the postage. Don't use the shotgun approach and tell us to "send all the mags with XR400 tests" unless you have plenty of time to wait. (Hint: We never had an official XR400 test bike).

Address Changes: If you don't want to miss an issue, let us know in advance of your move, so we can update our files before we mail your magazine into the ozone. The P.O. is supposed to forward magazines if you tell them to, but they don't do it in a hurry.

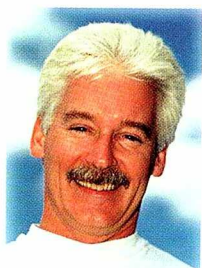
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Yankee Trader: Subscribers can advertise their bikes for sale free in Yankee Trader. Just write it down and mail it in, don't call us with it. Thanks!

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by Paul Clipper

Double or Nothing?

Two things happened recently that got me thinking about motocross, something I rarely do these days. The first was attending the opening round of the GNCC series in Okeechobee, Florida. I had an opportunity to ride the Industry class at the Florida race, but I wasn't really sure I wanted to. It was sunny and hot, rather dusty, and looked like it would be a whole lot more fun to get another lemonade and watch, and take a few pictures.

I was still partly on the fence about riding when I walked out onto the motocross section of the track to watch Monday afternoon practice—they let you practice the course at Okeechobee, so everybody has a chance to ride and get their bike dialed in. The first thing I see is some guy launch across a 60-foot tabletop and land it sweet on the other side. Wow! That's impressive. Then I scan around the track and see there's double-jumps in about four different places, and a couple more tabletops. Guys are jumping these things left and right, but there's hundreds of people on the track because it's an open practice session. There are C class riders poking along, just trying to stay upright, and meanwhile there are jump animals riding like winning practice is the only thing that matters. The more I watched, the more it looked like mayhem, and when I saw one guy jump clear over another rider—this is practice, remember—I was sure I wasn't going to ride the next day.

You know, I mean it would be one thing if I could ride the track with a bunch of my spode friends, and we could screw around with the jumps or avoid them or whatever. We're not jumpers. I never learned how to clear a double, and dropping the front end to slide down a tabletop properly is a mysterious art to me. I mean, I have never done it. It seems to me that every time my front end gets low my feet are up in the air and I'm about to meet the ground in a most interesting way. So I'll ride hare scrambles no problem. I even like to have a single, solitary jump now and then, because airborne is fun, but watching the potential carnage on that Florida track honestly scared me off that day.

(I have to add the fact that I was doubly apprehensive because I'd be riding someone else's bike, a machine I'd never slung a leg over before, and I just can't get that comfortable that fast. It'd be a little better if I was doing it on my own bike, but I still wouldn't have ridden down there. Too chicken.)

The second thing was calling Rich Daly at Dyno Port the week after, and telling him about what had seen down there. "It's crazy, isn't it?" I said to him.

"It's not crazy, it's stupid, plain and simple!" came his reply, and I soon learned that I had touched of a powder keg of emotions here. "The sport of motocross used to be a fun thing to do, but now we're practically killing people with it.

I've made it my mission to change motocross and try to educate race promoters that we don't have to injure riders to have a good time."

Rich is passionate about it, there is no doubt. He's not anti-racing, far from it. All he wants is racing to be a little safer. He has too many friends in wheelchairs, he says, and he's sick of it.

He has a point, even one that I—a non-motocrosser—can understand. It's been my belief that the popularity of Supercross style racing has split our sport down the middle, as far as amateur riding goes. On one side are the people

of us licked our wounds afterwards. And never once did we risk coming up short on a double, casing out and breaking both arms, nor did we have Johnny Wingnut launching off a triple and landing on us because he wanted that plastic trophy so bad. There was still plenty of risk—there's nothing "safe" about racing anything—but the old tracks were much more user-friendly if you got out of shape on them.

And being "jumpless" doesn't mean being sissy. Unadilla, as far as I can recall, never had a man-made jump on it, and few would argue that

"Never once did we risk coming up short on a double, casing out and breaking both arms, nor did we have Johnny Wingnut launching off a triple and landing on us because he wanted that plastic trophy so bad."


like me, who can't hack Supercross riding and know it, and on the other side are the jump artists. Not that there's anything wrong with being in either camp, mind you, I like what I do and given the circumstances I'm happy. The trouble is between both these camps are a lot of injured riders, guys who thought they wanted to be Jeremy McGrath because he made it look easy, and now they're wondering if hare scrambles might be more fun, once they heal. Or if they heal. Or maybe they're going to heal and take up some other sport, because "motorcycles are too dangerous."

That's the one thing that really raises my hackles, the "motorcycles are too dangerous" line of thinking. There is nothing dangerous about a motorcycle. It is inert, a piece of art, you can see them in museums. There's nothing dangerous about them riding down the highway. The dangerous part is when some wingnut aims it at a wall and then tries to sue everybody because he got hurt. The dangerous part is when little Johnny Wingnut sees a set of doubles and launches into them with no clue how to get out of the other side without a wheelchair.

Now you know, I'm not trying to be negative, but Rich Daly is right. I probably would ride motocross on the odd weekend if it was anything like it was a long time ago, when I started riding. Or if I had the option to ride such a track. The old style of tracks—with a lot of turns and berms and off-cambers, and maybe two or three jumps—would definitely look stupid and boring to most of our Supercross clowns these days, but you know what? People raced on them. Bar-banging, throttle twisting, berm slamming racing, and the best rider always won, and the rest

it wasn't one of the toughest, meanest, most humbling motocross tracks in history. And I'd still like to ride the Unadilla course one day. But I don't want to ride the Anaheim stadium track.

The proof that there's something wrong is as easy as reading Cycle News. I recall a couple months back, in one of the stories on the first Supercross races of the season, they ran a laundry list of all the riders on the "injured" list, and it was only two or three races into the season. Jimmy Button, Keith Johnson, Donovan Mitchell, Jeff Emig, there must have been eight or ten more names. All of the injuries were related to extreme jumping—cased it on a triple, came up short on a triple, short on a double, jumped on in a race—and I hate to say it but all avoidable if the tracks were designed more for racing and less for air time.

Rich Daly has a mission, and a mountain to climb in front of him, but I'm a hundred percent for him. We have a new category of Freestyle riding in our sport now, a sort of exhibition-style jumping contest dominated by artists like Travis Pastrana and Mike Metzger; a sport with its own heroes and founding fathers, if we can offer such a title to Seth Enslow, and they're doing some really cool things with extreme jumping. And it's great, huge fun to watch and the guys are incredible acrobats. So right now, we have a chance in this business to quickly and quietly turn motocross back into racing and leave the jumping contests to Freestyle. Personally, I think the racing would get better, and you'd probably see a lot of "old guys" like me and Rich a lot more enthusiastic about motocross. Plus, we'd keep a lot of our friends and family out of the hospital; and that would be a wonderful thing. 



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End of WR400 story

Well, we blew it, and with the most looked-for story of the year. The Yamaha WR400 story from last month is missing its last paragraph, and we don't know how we let that obvious lack slip by. At any rate, here's the final words on that story, and we apologize to everyone who couldn't function until they read the last words!

"As a matter of fact, the only thing the WR doesn't have going for it is the lack of an electric starter, which a few years ago wasn't that big of a deal, but now with Suzuki's new DR400 and KTM's new E-start EXCs, it's going to turn into more and more of an issue. But until it's the main issue, keep in mind that you can buy a WR400 and seek satisfaction in the fact that you're not giving away 20 pounds of weight carrying around a battery and starter gear. And it starts so well you don't really need a button anyhow. It's a nice bike. We'd look forward to riding one again, any time (especially in Costa Rica!)."

Tour Nevada

Real quick: Matt Ernst of Nevada Motorcycle Adventures let us know there's a special NETA members Nevada tour available for the week of July 2-7, and for more information you should contact NMA at (775)359-4380. If you haven't ridden in Nevada by now, it's about time you got around to it. Wide open spaces, little cowboy towns and big mountains await you. We hope to do it again, soon!



National Results

The third round of the AMA/FMF National Enduro Series recently rolled past, with Mike Lafferty taking the overall win at a slippery Georgia event. Michael led a KTM sweep of the first three positions, being followed home by SETRA champ Allen Gravitt and Brian Garrahan of Boulder Creek, California. This was Lafferty's first overall win of the year, following a second in the Arizona round, and a third in the California season opener. The win moves Lafferty up to second in the points standings, behind Yamaha's Randy Hawkins, who scored the win at the first two rounds aboard his enduroized YZ426. Hawkins has the official points lead right now, with Lafferty in second 76 to 78, and Garrahan in third with 50 points. As we write this we're anticipating the South Jersey national, set for this Sunday, so it's too early to let you know what happened, and we'll be printing by the time we find out. Oh well, tune in next month for the full skinny.

NETA Series

If you'd like to see how the New England Trials Association does their thing, clip out this schedule and tack it to your calendar. NETA is all trials, and they have some classic New England terrain to test yourself on, and entry fees are only \$10 per rider for beginners, \$20 for everybody else. Sign-up is always 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., with an 11:00 start. Call the contact numbers below for more information, and don't forget the annual banquet on December 9, 2000.

2000 NETA Schedule

March 26, Escoheag Hill Road, Exeter, RI; Rhode Island Trials Club, Mike Helstrom (401) 539-0715
 April 30, Stantack Road, Meriden, CT, Meriden Motorcycle Club, Bob Kennedy, (203) 235-9669
 May 21, Adler's Sand Pit Rt-44, Chepachet, RI; Rhode Island Trials Club, Bill Ross, (401) 539-0715
 June 11 Escoheag Hill Road, Exeter, RI; Rhode Island Trials Club, Bob Manifol, (401) 539-0715
 July 16, Stantack Road, Meriden, CT; Meriden Motorcycle Club, Mike Suravich, (203) 235-9669
 August 6, Tower Hill Road, Cumberland, RI, King Philip Trail Riders, Abe LeFebvre, (508) 222-7005
 August 27, Stantack Road, Meriden, CT, Meriden Motorcycle Club, Butch Ives, (203) 235-9669
 September 17, Durgin Lane, Ossipee, NH, Seacoast Trials Club, Sonny Gregory, (781) 938-9298
 September 24, Shermantown Road, N. Kingston, RI, Rhode Island Trials Club, Jeff Salois, (401) 539-0715
 October 1, Pittstown, NY, State Line Riders Max Parkes, (518) 663-8107
 October 22, 815 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI, Rhody Rovers, George Truesdale, (401) 785-0300
 November 12, Stantack Road, Meriden, CT, Meriden Motorcycle Club, Gary Shamock, (203) 235-9669

New Tricks from the Moose

Moose's new XCR gear for 2000 features a lot of good points to make it even better. Moose is using more synthetic moisture-wicking materials so you can sweat without getting soggy, and a lot of ventilated mesh, especially in the new Sahara hot weather gear. The XCR pants now have a leather patch on the inside of the knees to help you hold the tank, as well as a Kevlar patch on the lower legs to grip the inside of your boots and keep the pants from rotating. All good stuff, look it over at your local Moose Offroad dealer. While you're at it, ask about the new Off Road Catalog from Parts Unlimited. It has all the Moose gear as well as all sorts of hard parts you're going to need sooner or later.

Reward Offered

Two kids dirt bikes stolen in the Raynham, Mass., area are being sought. One is a Honda XR80, VIN# JH2HE010XYK903282, the other is a Honda TRX90 quad, VIN# JH3TE1804YK502358. The XR is red and white, and the quad is red and black, both are year 2000 machines. If you have any information, or see the vehicles around, call (508)822-6239 and feel free to break the fingers of the scum who stole them.

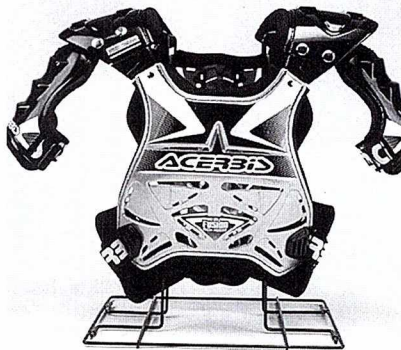
ECEA Kickoff

The ECEA season whooped off to a start this year with the Curly Fern enduro, a good typical South Jersey enduro, on March 19th. We'd have a story in this issue but we haven't seen official results yet. We do know that Jamie Wright won the overall, a B&B, Moose, C-Cycle, Boyesen, Twin-Air, Bridgestone, Smith, IMS, FMF and Cycra sponsored rider, his first ECEA overall of his career. The second run of the season, the Sandy Lane, happened

the following weekend, and past champion Fred Hoess, from Bromley Cycles, took the overall win. What about last year's champion, Billy Atkinson? We've seen him at all the GNCC races so far, and his goal this year is to chase the GNCC series and see what sort of fine result he can pull. You'll probably see him at some of the ECEA runs that don't conflict, but he will not be defending his title this year.

Exclusively for the Female Form

Acerbis, always the innovator in plastic lifestyle enhancements, now has a new chest protector available to fit the female form exclusively. The Lady Fusion picks up where the original Lady Proton started—with a chest protector shaped to fit the unique protection requirements of the feminine physique. This is the real thing; it stays on better than a men's protector would, and def-



initely fits better. Will it make you look better? Well, that's all up to the individual, isn't it? How well can you accessorize? Get the Lady Fusion at your Acerbis dealer for a suggested retail of \$129.

Alligator Hunting

Speaking of the Hawkins/Lafferty battle, the two met up again at the annual Alligator Enduro during Daytona Speed Week, and once again Hawkins prevailed; with Lafferty clocking in second and Kawasaki rider Joey Ambrosini fin-

ishing third. We asked Hawkins what was up, was it contract-renewal time or what? "It sure does look like that, doesn't it?" laughed Hawkins. "Really, we've been working hard on the 426 engine, we've gotten some new parts to try, and we're really having good luck with it. They got a new clutch in them this year and I'm having a hard time breaking them, so that's real good." Whatever the reason, Randy is on fire this year, and it looks like he's going to be a big force to reckon with at every one of the nationals.

Volunteers Needed

The Berkshire Trails Council needs your help, in supplying labor for trail maintenance in the Berkshires. As you know our right to ride in New England is dependent upon putting in a required amount of time maintaining and yes, sometimes cutting new trail. Coming up on May 7th, your assistance is requested at Beartown State Forest and Tolland State Forest in Western Mass. If you can make it to either one, please call Mike Stone at (800)999-2003.

Videos Available

Marshall Rose, who travels nowhere without a video camera up to his face, has videos available from the ISDE and various other races. His videos are insane, in that you get full coverage of every rider, without fail—he turns the camera on in the morning and doesn't shut it off for the rest of the day. His video tapes from Portugal last year, for example, total 17 hours! And you can get the whole 17 hours for the stupid-low price of \$55. Marshall's not out to make money, he's just trying to support his tape habit. He also has videos from the Tulsa '94 ISDE, as well as Poland, Finland, Italy and Australia, and he also has long tapes of the AMA National Hare Scrambles in Wilseyville, Hollister, and Shasta Dam from '97, '98, and '99. Want to check them out? Give him a call, or write to Marshall Rose, 5756 Robin Hood Dr., El Sobrante, CA 94803; (510)223-5764.

GNCC Gallivanting

Speaking of the GNCC series, we've been to them all so far and you know what? It's a lot of fun, and plenty interesting. Racer Productions gets an incredible number of entrants from all over the country—and the world—and that just increases the interest. We've been sunburnt in Florida, rained on in Georgia and North Carolina, and just having a ball everywhere. Everybody there has a story to tell; you could write a book already from the exploits of Heidi Landon and Doug Douchette, who are traveling with the intention



Enjoying a rainy afternoon in Georgia.

of winning the Women's class for Heidi. So far Heidi's done well enough to be sitting in first place points, with two wins, a second, and a fourth after sliding down a muddy hill on her face in North Carolina. Doug has had a good finish in Florida and a badly broken ankle in Georgia, and their traveling rig puked out its transmission in Virginia. I hope they can afford to stick with it; the long story is going to be great when they're done.

In the Pro class this year it looks like it's going to be a serious battle between KTM's Shane Watts, again,

and Paul Edmondson, who is riding a Kawasaki like he has a new lease on life. The Suzuki team is typically strong, with Steve Hatch usually getting the holeshots and Rodney Smith leading each race at least for a period of time, but bad luck seems to be chasing them around the track.

Ironman News

Cliff Side Off Road Park in Rawlings, MD, sent us a note telling us that the opening round of the Ironman Hare Scrambles series was kicked off successfully on March 19, with Jason Raines, 1999 Ironman Champion and a native of Washington state, taking the overall win in fine form on his YZ. He took the holeshot and disappeared, pulling a lead of a full five minutes by the finish. He was followed in by Suzuki rider Ronnie Burnfield, and Yamaha rider Norman Feth.

Free Classic Video

For a limited time, MSR is offering a free copy of the classic Bruce Brown movie *On Any Sunday* with the purchase of any MSR Gore Tex or Blitz product. Malcolm Smith, as you know, is one of the stars of the movie, along with Steve McQueen and Mert Lawwill, and Malcolm is also the MS in MSR. See the tie in? See the movie? Get it at your MSR dealer.



More Videos

Garth Bean has been selling videos of the NETRA events for the past six years, and his tapes aren't quite as long as Marshall Rose's tapes, but just as much fun. Garth has tapes of practically all of the NETRA events of the past, and he sells them each for \$24.95. Get in touch with him at P.O. Box 79, Ashford, CT 06278, or call (860)429-2997.

Cool Web Sites

Two interesting new Web sites to check out: www.mlaafferty.com and www.enduroeng.com. They're related; Enduro Engineering is one of Mike Lafferty's major sponsors, and the Web sites are a sort of a fan update reference for Mike Lafferty's racing exploits, and a cool catalog of Enduro Engineering products. Look 'em up and look 'em over!

Reward Offered II

Morel's Cycle in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, was burglarized on December 14, and still has had no luck in finding any of the stolen merchandise. This is particularly hard on the Morels, since it is a family-owned business and they were not insured for the loss. Among the motorcycles taken were a 1998 WR125 Husky, #ZCGWR1257VW020051, and a 1999 WR260, #ZCGWR3609XV040104. Two Shortster mini bikes, made by Carter Bros. were also stolen, as well as two Midwest mini bikes, and a Kasea mini bike, three Stihl chain saws, 14, 18, and 20" bars, all kinds of riding gear and helmets. Morel's will pay a \$5000 reward for information that leads to the recovery of this merchandise, call them if you have any questions at (508)695-2061. ↑

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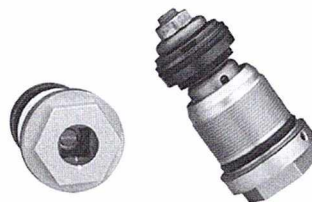
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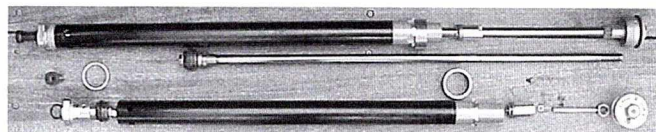


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• Marzocchi 45 and 50 mm Cartridge Kits

Replaces internal position damper rods with speed sensitive cartridge rod valving and compression and rebound adjustment to both legs.



by Mike Lafferty

Pick the Fastest Line



This is an easy one. The business of winning enduros is the art of getting through the trees fast. That means no delays, no indecision, no mistakes. One of the biggest mistakes I see guys make at the enduros is picking the wrong line when there's a choice in front of them.

Take the photos below as an example. In the photo both of the lines around this corner look equally used, but it's because of the camera position. When you're riding, as you come up to this turn—and it's a fast turn—the plainest and most natural-looking line is the outside one. The inside line is obscured somewhat by those stick-like bushes, and for most riders it wouldn't be the line they would take. But they'd be making a big mistake.

Look close at the photo of me going around the outside of the turn. I have to slow down and stand the bike up close to vertical, or I'm going to clip my shoulder on the tree marking the inside of the turn. Most guys will take this line all day, because it was the first line they saw, and they can also see that they have plenty of room on the outside of the turn if anything goes wrong.

Well, you can look at the second photo and see that there's a whole lot of things wrong with thinking that way. First off, what's on the outside of that turn doesn't matter. You're going to jam around that turn so fast it doesn't matter if there's a wrecked Buick parked there, you'll just berm off of it and go. But that tree on the inside is going to slow you down, put you in an awkward position, and probably make you shift down a gear. And every time you shift down a gear you might as well add a couple seconds to your score card.

In the second photo I have plenty of room on the inside of the turn, and more than enough on the outside since I can run my wheels right out to the tree if I have to. I'm a gear higher, and on the gas, and if you were on the outside line when I took this inside line I'd have 20 feet on you by the time you were on the gas again.

What's wrong with the inside line? Well, actually

there are a lot of things, but training and experience will overcome a most of them. The first is you can't see it very well. The only way you're going to find lines like this is to look ahead, look around, don't get locked onto staring right in front of your front fender. Even coming up to this turn at speed, if you look it over quickly you can see the two trees and see that there's

nothing else big sticking up. If you're familiar with the local terrain, you know that there's only a limited number of plants that can be growing, you know that according to the last few miles you've ridden there hasn't been any logging activity so there's probably no stumps in the way. This is all called "reading the terrain," and it's much more than just looking around.

"The business of winning enduros is the art of getting through the trees fast. That means no delays, no indecision, no mistakes."



It's basing everything that's going to happen next on what just happened in the last mile or so. You might not be able to accurately predict the next wrecked Buick in the way, but you can come pretty close.

The second thing wrong with the turn is you don't know what's on the other side of it, and maybe the club didn't cut the trail on the inside. Well, so you might hit some brush piled in there from the trail clipping process, or get face-whipped by some untrimmed slappers. What's worse? A little bit of a beating or getting beat?

You know from your enduro riding experience so far that you NEVER really know what's around the next turn, and you just have to be ready for anything. Keep your feet up so you don't hit them on anything solid and break a bone or two, be ready to pull your arms in to protect them, and basically be alert to having to change your line fast if you have to. Even just an inch here and there can make the difference between hitting something or just squeaking by, and if you don't hit anything, you've just shaved off a few seconds from your check-out score.

Concentrate on what you're doing, look for the fast line, and go for it. That's the kind of thing that wins races. ↑

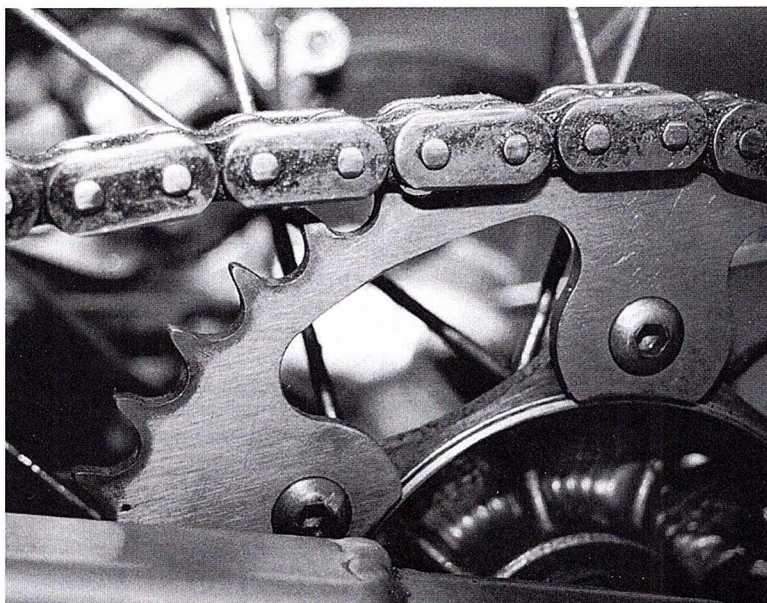
Product Evaluation

ETERNAL SPROCKETS

*Sidewinder's stainless steel sprockets wear better than iron
(and who would want iron anyhow?)*

A little better than a year ago, we picked up one of the first generation of the new Sidewinder Stainless rear sprockets for the back of our KTM 200 Jackpiner. The new stainless sprockets were said to be the last word on durability, something we were certainly interested in, riding as we do in the rocks and abrasive mud of the Northeast. With a fair amount of enduro riding along with all the trail riding we could squeeze in, a standard alloy rear sprocket was lasting us about a half of a season. At that point we'd have to pop for new sprockets. The stock alloy sprockets were either hooked or were actually starting to chip off teeth. If you don't catch a situation like this early enough, you can be left sitting on the side of the trail with a toothless rear sprocket, wondering how you're going to get out of the woods without wrecking something else.

Longer life would definitely be welcome, so we bolted on the Sidewinder Stainless and started riding again. The new Sidewinders are the flagship of the fleet, commanding the highest price of all their replacement sprockets, something like \$129 each, before any kind of discounts you may negotiate. However, price isn't



It's hard to believe this sprocket is a year old, but we put it on ourselves, and we're watching it outlast the chain. This is also the first generation of the Sidewinder stainless—the new ones are supposed to be much tougher. Unbelievable!

everything. These are the first commercially available sprockets that are laser cut out of stainless, which, of course won't rust, but at the same time it's the strongest material you can get for this application. Alloy sprockets are made out of aluminum alloy, and

though they are light weight, it's child's play to wear them out in wet sand or mud, and they also chip teeth fairly easily in rocks. We've seen some incredible disasters with aluminum sprockets.

That's why a lot of New Englanders opt for plain steel sprockets. They're tougher than aluminum, and last much longer in mud. On the negative side, they're very heavy and they can rust fairly badly if you don't keep them clean and oiled. And, they still wear out, usually hooking all the teeth rather than breaking any off.

Stainless is supposed to bridge the gap between alloy and carbon steel. It is lighter than carbon steel and tough as all get out, so tough the material has to be cut with an industrial laser guided by a CNC machine. We were told that the stainless sprocket would easily outlast the new chain we put on with it, just as long as we didn't do something stupid and bend the sprocket on a rock. Yes, the stainless sprocket will bend, but that's fine with us.

If it didn't bend under a serious impact it would probably tear all the bolts out of the hub, and we'd always rather replace a sprocket than an incredibly expensive alloy hub.

After inspecting this year-old sprocket we have to admit we're impressed. There is no evidence of hooking on the teeth, no discernable wear on the face of the teeth, and just a tiny amount of polishing where the side plates meet the sides of the teeth. It's dirty, and stained by chain lube, but basically it doesn't look much different than when we put it on. Kind of amazing, and when you inspect the inside of the chain links, you can see wear marks where the links have contacted the sprocket. Pretty plain which is tougher; this sprocket probably will outlast the chain, although the chain also still looks good. Perhaps the fact that the sprocket doesn't wear or hook helps keep the chain alive, since the chain doesn't have to try to conform to a wearing sprocket.

We're not chain and sprocket engineers, so we don't know for sure. What we do know is that the drive train for this KTM is showing signs of a much longer life than usual, and that's a big deal considering the conditions we ride in. It might wind up costing you \$30 more than the best alloy sprockets, but in our opinion the Sidewinder Stainless is well worth the investment. If you need a new rear sprocket, now's the time to get it. And if you don't right now, consider the stainless the next time you do. We recommend it highly. Find out more by calling Sidewinder at (630)513-1000. ⬆

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Sidewinder STAINLESS STEEL SLX-2000 Sprockets

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"Bullet-Proof" Sprockets: Go to www.off-road.com/toc/ and check out their February 2000 issue, with a 2-year desert field test and product evaluation of the SLX-2000 Stainless. An incredible review!

Levesque. Levesque pulled himself out just as Lawson was coming around leaving a nice rut for Lawson to bury his bike in. It took Lawson almost a minute to get unstuck leaving him to settle for third place for the day. Norton went on to take a surprising first place finish with Levesque finishing in second down just eleven seconds.

"I had no idea I was in the lead. I never saw

Levesque," said Norton after the race. "I was ready to settle for second place. I must have crashed ten times today and second place was looking just fine with me. But I'll take the win."

"I had a great ride," said Levesque. "I haven't been riding much at all for the past year. I got a great offer last year to race snowmobiles so I took some time off to pursue it. This year I decided to try the hare



Ah the joys of frozen whoopedos! Chris Chasse takes a bouncy line to 5th in the B250 class. (C.A.)

scrambles again. I got a new CR250 that Jeff Sylvester set up for me and I'm just going to see how it goes. I'm riding a little different this year just sitting back and riding smooth. Letting everyone else make the mistakes. I stayed on my bike all day and stayed with the same lines. I guess everyone else was taking that same line through the water and I just got stuck on the last lap."

Fourth place overall went to Decker. Decker and

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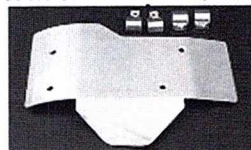
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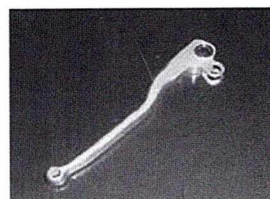
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3. Paul Dellaghelfa	Yam	4. Craig Richardson	Suz	Amateur 200		2. Pete Byrne	Yam
4. Patrick Corcoran	Yam	5. Tony Ferriera	Hon	1. Dan Young	KTM	3. Austin Jalbert	CRE
5. Jason Johnson		Novice Four Stroke		2. Scott Fetterman	Hon	Expert Vet	
Mini		1. Joseph Nazzard		3. James Waheslack		1. Russell Bain	Hon
1. Aaron Koehler	Kaw	2. Tom Pelletier		4. Michael Cimochowski	Yam	2. David Fraser	Kaw
2. Nick Swistro	Kaw	3. Joe Archambault	Hon	5. Rich Galaska		3. Todd Dabkowski	Kaw
Women		Novice Senior		Amateur Open		4. Kenneth Held	KTM
1. Heidi Landon	Hus	1. Robert Doyle		1. Daniel Marrs	KTM	Expert Four Stroke	
2. Dawn Shayer	Kaw	2. Thomas Curtin		2. Howard Kane	Hon	1. Greg Corbin	Hon
3. Tina Biello	Yam	3. Peter Koehler, Jr		3. Peter Smith	KTM	Expert Senior	
Novice 200		Novice Vet		Amateur Four Stroke		1. Robert White	KTM
1. Paul Smith	KTM	1. Michael Litwin, Jr.	Kaw	1. Jim Green	Hon	2. Norman Hebert	
		2. Bryan Cook	KTM				



Brian Lawson (#3) and Michael Bush experiment with two radically different lines through the ruts.

Patrick Timothy battled back and forth for several laps in the middle of the race before Decker was able to make a clean break and pull away. Timothy spent most of the day trying to get his bike to hook up and was happy with the top five finish.

The Expert High Point went to Dirt Works/Tech Tubes/Spectro's Kris Mooney. Mooney spent most of the first few laps battling with Expert 250 rider Jim

Edmonds. Once Mooney broke away from Edmonds, he picked his way through the AA line finishing eighth overall.

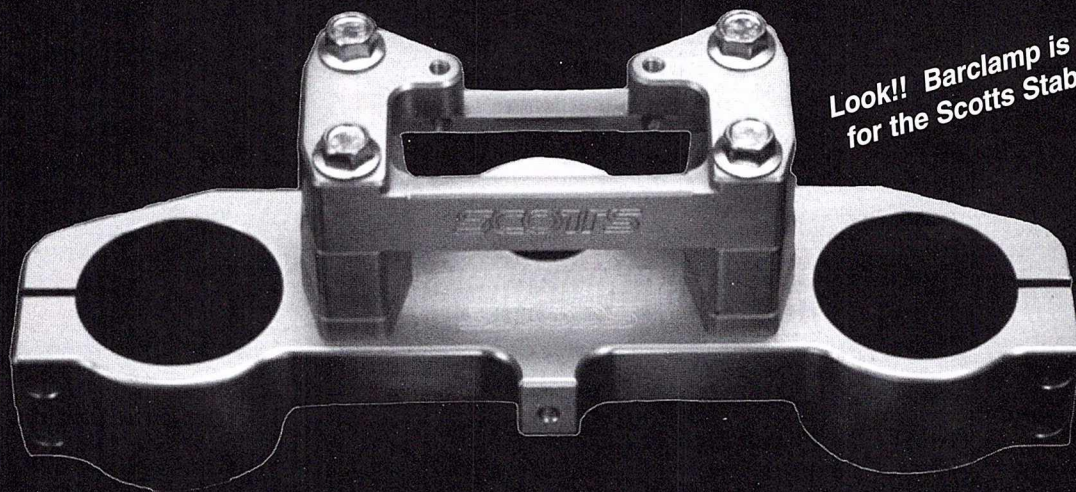
"It was an awesome track and I had a lot of fun," said Mooney. "I stayed on my bike all day. I did hit a few trees but I just wasn't judging them right." Edmonds went on to take the first place trophy in the Expert 250 class and ninth place overall.

The Junior class ran just after the sun came up, at 8:00am. The riders rode three laps of the frozen course with Gregg Hamel take his first win on a KTM. Hamel beat out second place Michael Cimochowski by one minute forty seconds. Paul Dellaghelfa finished third down another forty five seconds. Arron Koehler was the only Mini rider to finish all three laps, earning himself first place in the Mini class.

Heidi Landon once again took first place in the Women's class. Landon finished the three laps in just over one hour and five minutes, giving her tenth place overall in the event. ⬆

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B.A.D. SADDLES

"Don't Go Into Battle Without A BAD Saddle"

Make no bones about it, I love trick parts and accessories. If there is a product that will make riding my bike easier, make it work better, or make it go faster, than I'm probably itching to buy it. Mind you, I won't buy something simply because it looks cool, it has to have function for me to blow the moths out of my wallet. One product that functions as well as it looks is the BAD Saddle.

BAD Saddle is the brainchild of Barry Allen of Carolina Custom Upholstery, based out of Sunset Beach, NC. BAD is an acronym for Barry Allen Designs, and the BAD Saddle is the only truly custom-designed seat cover available. CCU offers their BAD Saddles in a plethora of colors and patterns that let you customize it for your scooter.

The seat covers come in either a 2- or 3-piece design. Each panel of the 2-piece design can be one of over fifteen different solid colors. The 3-piece version has the same solid color choices, and also offers a few different anti-slip designs, plus it allows

for a pre-printed pattern to be integrated on the rear panel. With so many colors to choose from, you can match any machine's color scheme. The pre-printed patterns available are checkerboard, safari, knobby, flames and a confederate flag. Anti-slip also comes in two flavors, standard and "Gatorback."

CCU can custom-build a BAD Saddle for any dirt bike or ATV, regardless of the vintage. CCU maintains a template for every BAD Saddle ever made, so they have the measurements for a whole range of makes and models of dirt bikes and ATV's. If they have the template for your bike on file, simply choose your colors and/or patterns, and your BAD Saddle will arrive promptly with complete, easy-to-follow instructions.

If you have an older bike, or a particular model that CCU doesn't have a template for, simply send them your seat, and they'll make your cover, install it and ship it back to you, with no extra charge for the installation.

The seat cover is designed with easy installation in mind. Unlike some other one-piece seat covers, or non-vinyl covers, the BAD Saddle doesn't require pre-heating or tons of stretching to mount properly. Simply center the cover over the seat, tack a few staples in

by Joe McLaughlin

the front, snug it up and tack a few staples in the rear, then pull over and staple each side. A few more staples around the perimeter, trim the excess, and you're done. It's literally that easy.

The cover I ordered for my 2000 KDX200 was a three-piece BAD Saddle. I chose black for the front panel, black "Gatorback" anti-slip for the middle, and solid green for the rear. As you can see, it's quite a visual improvement over the plain stock Kawasaki seat cover. I use Ceet tall foam, but this has no effect on the size of the cover, there is plenty of excess material to play with. Installation was a breeze. It took me only about 90 minutes to remove the stock



How BAD do you want to be?

cover and install the BAD Saddle, with the majority of that time going towards the removal of the stock cover. One thing I found particularly interesting is how Barry integrated a stitched letter "M" into the anti-slip design. I actually didn't notice it until the cover was installed on the seat. Very nice touch! I guess it helps to have a letter that can be easily integrated into the anti-slip pattern, and it certainly personalizes my bike for me.

Since installing the BAD Saddle, I've ridden more than three enduros, three turkey runs and logged quite a few miles of casual trail riding. Even after some falls, including a trip over the bars at a decent clip, my BAD Saddle still looks as good as new. The anti-slip design works very well, even in wet, muddy conditions, and isn't so offensively grippy that it pulls your pants down. It does a great job of keeping your butt firmly planted where you put it.

The BAD Saddles price is very reasonable too, considering you get a custom-made cover. Prices start at \$39.95 for the standard 2-piece design, \$49.95 for the 3-piece (solid, like shown) and \$59.95 for the 3-piece with checkerboard, safari, knobby or flame pattern. For those of you south of the Mason-Dixon Line, the 3-piece "Rebel" pattern is \$69.95.

To inquire about a custom made seat cover for your ride, BAD Saddles can be ordered by calling Carolina Custom Upholstery at 888-BAD-SDDL. Or, you can check them out on the web at www.badsaddles.com. ↑



The BAD saddle cover with its Gatorback section has a lot more grip than stock, and the black and green design looks much better.

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

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There are few things more painful in life than having an alarm clock go off at four fifteen a.m., especially if your first cloudy thought is "Where am I?" It's a terrible feeling through an alcoholic haze, but bad enough if you'd spent the last part of the night before stone sober wrestling with an online service for three days worth of e-mail. I had that happen to me this morning; being clawed awake by the front desk in a Holiday Inn just north of Palm Beach International, well in advance of what I would consider a good night's sleep, especially since I'd been sleeping rotten for the past two days worrying about the start of the Grand National Cross Country series for this year.

What have I got to worry about with the GNCC? Well, you'd have to know me to understand. I worry about everything. By last night, though, it was all history and I was finally able to relax—dump the rental car, get into a hotel room (paid for and abandoned by someone else—thank you Davey!), and fill my belly with enough sushi to know what Flipper was really laughing about. I was ready for a good 12-hour nap, but four hours was all I had time for before the voices in my head started again. Time to get to work!

The start of this year's GNCC was thick with anti-

pation. Last year it ended with Rodney Smith nailing the #1 plate, but he had to endure being dogged unmercifully at the beginning and end of the season by 125-riding Shane Watts, who won four or five events last year before slaughtering his knee, then winning another few at the end of the season. Watts had spent the off-season racing and taking it easy back home in Maffra, Australia, and was ready to romp, this time riding a KTM 200 in Florida. Everybody, including the Suzuki team, was interested in what Watts was going to do this year.

The other interesting new twist in the GNCC was the introduction of former national MXer Mike Kiedrowski to off road racing. There is no doubt that Kiedrowski is fast, although he would be racing for Suzuki on the new DRZ 400 four-stroke, and a four-stroke is a different kind of animal when you're riding the Pro class for the overall. Scott Summers could do it on an XR600, but we've all agreed long ago that Summers is super-human. Would Kiedrowski have the mettle to wrestle a thumper onto the podium? Would he make a ton of newcomer's mistakes? We were here to find out.

And speaking of Scott Summers, he was still on the

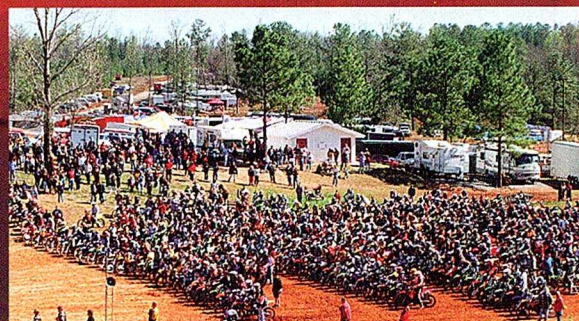
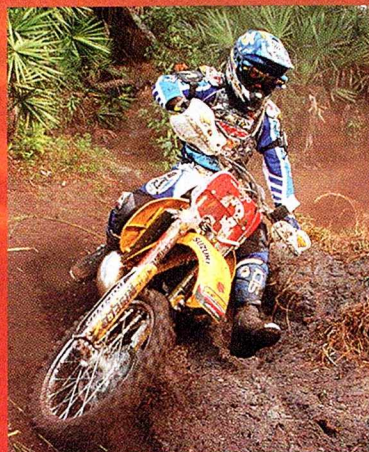
"recovering" list. Having healed from the broken femur he suffered last year, he started training again and found out soon enough that his leg didn't work right. He finally found out that he had torn his ACL (anterior cruciate ligament—back of the knee) in the same crash, so he had to go under the knife to have that fixed. At the same time he had a ligament problem on the back of one of his hands worked on, so at Florida he was still limping and spectating. He'll be back soon enough, though.

Kirton Ranch, Round One Okeechobee, FL 3/6-7

What happened in Florida was classic GNCC—somewhat predictable, but always full of surprises. We'd all come into the race full of excitement for some new results, hints of what was to come given by early season results in the AMA National Hare Scrambles series out west. It seems Brit phenom and ex-World Champion Paul "Eddy" Edmondson (1999 GNCC #7) had switched to Kawasaki for this new season, late of the feted Suzuki team, and was riding with a new lease on life, winning the first two races handily and beating Shane Watts, Aussie wonderboy of the

The sun comes up over Lake Okeechobee, just as it rises on a new GNCC series. Fred Andrews (#2) hasn't had the greatest of luck so far, after running out of fuel in Florida and finishing a close fourth in Georgia. Shane Watts took a familiar finishing position at Okeechobee, but only managed a third in Georgia after a tumble.

AIN!



by Paul Clipper

KTM team "Fair and square!" as Mike Lafferty told us. Could this first GNCC finally reveal the crack in Watts's armor? Well you know, it might have, but it didn't. He's still amazingly fast.

Eddy was the man at first, and so was Fred Andrews. The two Kawie boys overcame a holeshot by Rodney Smith's RM and freight trained around the course like they planned to own it some day. Watts moved up from a fair start, this race riding a KTM200 instead of his usual 125, and looking just as strong. Andrews and Eddy looked really in control though, and may have just jammed right to the finish like that, except for a bit of bad math by their pit crew.

Everybody else planned to bring their riders in after three laps for a fresh tank of fuel, but the Kawasaki pits had the confidence that their bikes could go four without running out. The green team figured they could stretch out a comfortable cushion while everyone else was gassing, and then bring their boys in on the next lap for a fast splash without losing position. It's a great strategy if you have the fuel capacity, but unfortunately both Fast Eddy and Andrews ran dry in their fourth lap. According to the rules you can only gas in your pits, unless you get fuel from another rider, and Andrews knew that. As soon as he mooched some gas he rode back to the Team Green tent and took his boots off. Eddy might not have known all the

finer rules, or maybe he wanted some training time, so he took a couple more fast laps before they pulled him in to chill. Both guys looked fast and smooth, and I felt bad for them as they sat there annoyed and speculating.

The absence of green in front of him turned Watts into the lead dog, and he admitted afterwards he was having fun. "I just started riding me own pace, feelin' good on the 200, and every time I came around it was 'plus 30', 'plus one', 'plus 1:30.' I didn't feel like I was going that fast really, but I was just skipping ahead."

We've seen him do it before, and wondered if he'd do it this year, after once again wrecking his knee last year and having it completely rebuilt in the middle of last season. Watts has an incredible sense for traffic, having no problem with lappers ever, apparently, and a natural feel for the bike that boils down to an indescribably fast rider on what is essentially a stock KTM (once again). He takes some punishment—it was painful watching him hobble across the pits after the race was over—but once he gets up to stride it's like no one can get near him. And yes, he won the overall at Okeechobee.

Following him in was Rodney Smith, Team Suzuki's numero uno, last year's champion and quite happy to be the second man on the podium. Last year he didn't finish this race, and readily admits that he's not a fan

of the Okeechobee course (dry, dusty, soft sand, whoopeddos and palmettos). Although a win would be nice, second place points is a fine way to start the season, and we could tell Rodney was satisfied. Third man on the stage was Rodney's Suzuki teammate Steve Hatch, who was grinning from ear to ear and made sure we all knew it. "I thought about it hard all winter, and decided I was going to be on the podium every time this year!" A lofty goal, but Steve can probably do it.

The Florida course did a fine job of humbling everyone, and spread the pack way out over three hours and seven ten-mile laps. So spread out, as a matter of fact, that Watts was on the podium and interviewed by announcer John Ayers as well as Jerry Bernardo's ESPN crew before Rodney even got to the finish line. Then Rodney had time to say more than a few words and wash his face before Hatch zipped through the checkers. It was a long tough struggle for everyone.

Suzuki's Mike Kiedrowski made his debut, racing the new four-stroke DRZ, and he looked in control on the MX course. He does need some off-road experience and line savvy, though, and he'll gain it over time. We saw him parked more than once by lappers he should have avoided, and Hatch said he took a few good headers hitting things he should have missed. Mike Lafferty looked really good on the MX course, much

Steve Hatch made the podium in Florida and finished fifth in Georgia. His teammate Rodney Smith is defending his number one plate this year, and still leads every race it seems. Paul Edmondson is hammering on his new Kawasaki ride, and a look at the afternoon race lineup in Georgia. Big race, big crowd.

better than before after a winter of MX practice in Florida. However, not too many know that Mike has been riding with a couple of cracked bones in his throttle hand, and in this first tough test of the flesh his hand lost out. "I jammed my front wheel into a couple of deep holes and slammed that hand good," he said, sitting in the box van with a huge ice pack. He wasn't too happy with an eleventh place finish, and

looked worried about the rest of the season. But then Mike can worry about stupid stuff just as much as me, so I know where he's coming from.

Paradise Park, Round Two Macon, GA 3/12

The second round of the new millennium's GNCC series almost turned into a mudbath, but not quite.

The ATV racers on Saturday had the full joy of racing in the pouring rain in all that red Georgia clay, but by the start time of the afternoon race on Sunday the track was actually tacking up nicely. Sunday's weather of clear skies and a fair spring breeze mercifully did it's best to dry out the ground, enough that lap times were surprisingly short during the race, and nearly everyone got out of the pits without being towed by a bulldozer.

Team Suzuki's Rodney Smith was the winner of the day, ultimately triumphing over a shortened course that was still fast and tricky. He finished a scant two seconds ahead of Paul Edmondson, who has turned into a serious threat on his new Kawasaki ride. Third place went to KTM's Shane Watts, who finished another 20 seconds back, with Fred Andrews (Kaw) and Steve Hatch (Suz) just a handful of seconds behind him.

The finishing order doesn't tell the whole tale of the Georgia race, which took place at the Paradise Park motocross facility outside of Macon. The course at Paradise, with or without the mud, is well known as one of the tighter GNCC venues. This year it was cut to approximately 9.5 miles, allowing a Pro lap time of 26 to 28 minutes. Smith, Edmondson, Hatch,

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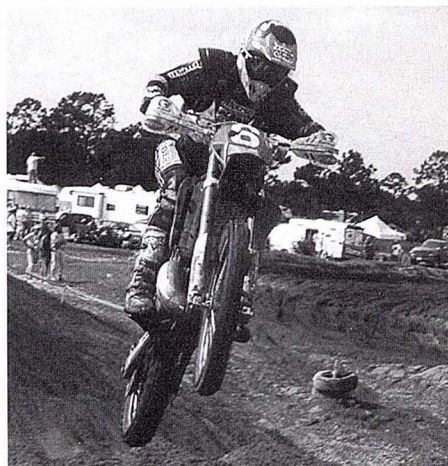
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Steve Hatch is still the holeshot king, here leading the pack in Georgia. Below: Who says Millville boys can't jump? Mike Lafferty playing in the sand.



Andrews and Watts circulated around the course as a group the entire time, spreading out somewhat on the MX track and more open parts of the course, but tightening back up into a bar-banging clump when they went into the trees. Because of this the running order of the pack changed on every lap, making for some really exciting racing.

At first it looked like a Shane Watts runaway again, as Watts emerged in the lead after the first lap, scrambling to the front after a Steve Hatch holeshot. Watts was riding this week on a KTM 250MXC, and whether it was the bike or the course he didn't seem able to pull away from everyone as he did in Florida the week before. The pack was content to let him lead, and all

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the other positions changed radically, with Smith coming around once in sixth place (third lap) and Edmondson finishing the first lap in a lowly eighth place. Edmondson had been complaining of a cold or the flu before the event, and without a doubt he looked terrible before the start, but racing does have a way of pushing even illness aside. The same cold plagued Brian Garrahan (KTM) who up until three minutes before the start wasn't going to race, but he quickly suited up with no time to spare and finished a respectable 11th overall (his brother Pat finished 8th).

On the fifth lap Watts made his only serious mistake, and a quick spill on the MX course knocked him back a number of positions, recovering to third by the end of the lap. Although he caught back up to the lead group quickly, the fierce pace set by Smith and Edmondson never left him a chance to pass, and the three finished up within 30 seconds of each other. Because the morning race was delayed as the track was changed to delete the worst mud, the afternoon race was started late as well and checker-flagged at six laps. This wound up being a two hour, forty-five



Mike Kiedrowski is still learning the GNCC ropes on his Suzuki DRZ. Below: Our favorite Women's class rider, Heidi Landon charged to a second in Florida, and a first in Georgia on her Husky 125.



minute race, short of the GNCC's classic three hours, but necessary to get everyone out of the woods before dark.

Yamaha's Doug Blackwell, smiling, happy and always upbeat, put in a good ride and finished sixth overall. His sixth was better, and perhaps a little more satisfying, than the 15th place finish the week before

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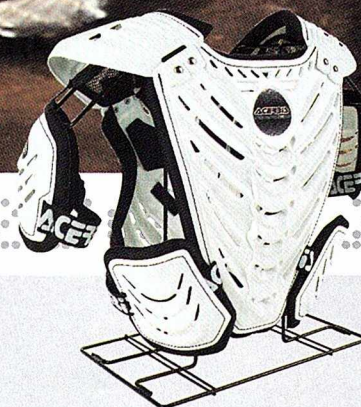
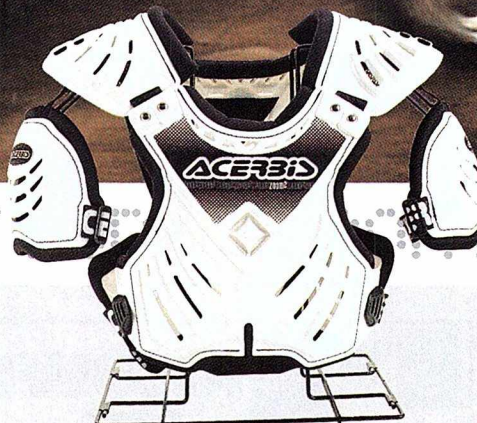
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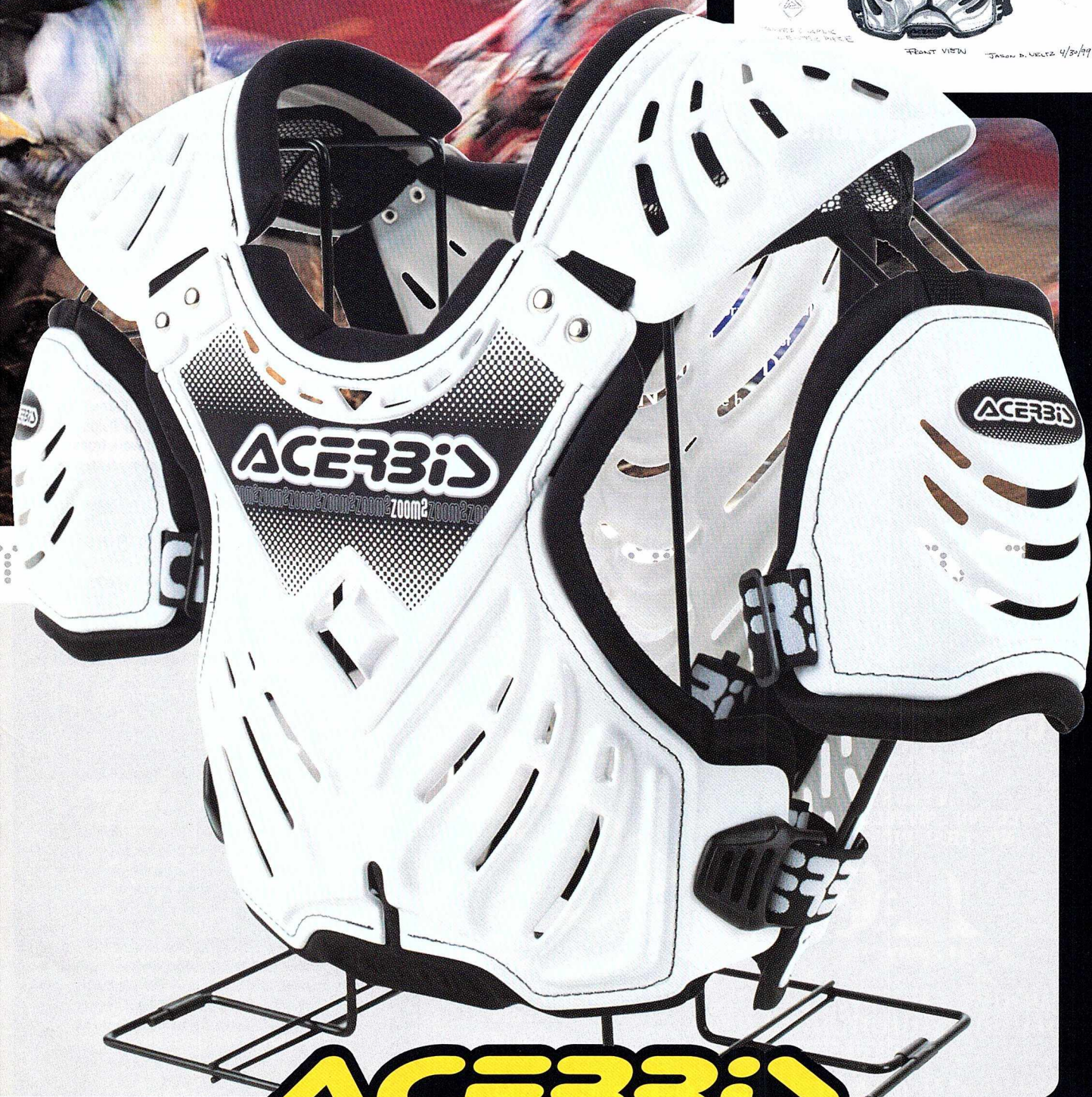
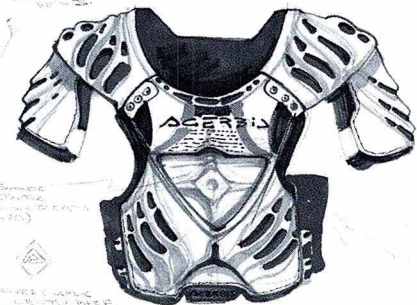
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'00 TM 250E Specifications:**Engine**

Engine Type	249cc liquid-cooled case reed 2-stroke
Bore x Stroke	66.4mm x 72mm (Vertex piston)
Compression Ratio	15.5:1
Carburetor	38mm Keihin PWK
Clutch	Grimeca hydraulic
Transmission	5 speed
Final Drive	13/51
Ignition	Koukusan CDI w/ 140 watt lighting coil

Chassis

Frame	Steel perimeter
Front Suspension	46 mm Paioli Blue Steel conventional fork 11.8" travel and adjustable compression and rebound damping (tested) Optional 46mm Paioli USD or 50mm Marzocchi) 0.40 kg/mm spring rate
Rear Suspension	Ohlins shock w/adjustable compression and rebound damping coupled to a rising rate linkage, 12.3" travel, 5.0 kg/mm spring rate
Front Brake	Brembo 270mm rotor
Rear Brake	Brembo 220mm rotor
Tires	Michelin Enduro Comp III tires front and rear, 90/90-21 front, 140/80-18 rear

Dimensions

Wheelbase	57.5"
Seat Height	38"
Ground Clearance	15"
Fuel Capacity	3.2 gal.
Dry Weight	107 kg (235.4 lb.)
Suggested Retail Price:	\$6,650

WHAT IS IT, AND WHERE IS IT FROM?

TM motorcycles are manufactured in Milan, Italy. The U.S. importer is a company called TWS USA, Inc., found at 8468 Loma Place in Upland, California. Their telephone number is (909)608 0082. Both the Italian factory and the U.S. importer have decent Web sites for additional product information. They are: www.mototm.com and www.twsusa.com. Dealer support has always been a question mark with such a rare animal as the TM, but recently support has improved greatly and continues to do so with an increasing network of U.S. dealers, nearly 40 at the time of this writing.

Stock 250 jetting is 175 main, 45 pilot, 7 slide, NIEC needle with the clip in the middle position.

Overall the model year 2000 TMs are well put-together machines, showing none of the crudeness you might expect from a small bike manufacturer. They look right and have proven their constitution in international competition many times over. A couple of minor glitches noted include modifications to the fuel cell and brake pedal. Standard on the 250 and optional on the 125 is a new 12 liter (3.2 gallon) fuel tank. It's a large tank that sticks up a bit in front of the seat, with obvious hazards. Additionally, there is an interference with the triple clamp when the handlebar is turned to full lock, necessitating some careful ingenuity with a heat gun to re-shape the tank. Both our test bikes had the large tank modified in this manner and they looked pretty good. Another fix was to weld a small tab onto the inside of the brake pedal for a pedal height adjustment. The stock brake pedal has no independent height adjustment, an essential to many riders. Finally, we'd have to say that the yellow

'00 TM 125E Specifications:**Engine**

Engine Type	123.5cc liquid-cooled case reed 2-stroke
Bore x Stroke	54mm x 54.4mm (Vertex piston)
Compression Ratio	16.7:1
Carburetor	38mm Keihin PWK
Clutch	Grimeca hydraulic
Transmission	6 speed
Final Drive	13/52
Ignition	Koukusan CDI w/ 140 watt lighting coil

Chassis

Frame	Steel perimeter
Front Suspension	46 mm Paioli Blue Steel conventional fork 11.8" travel and adjustable compression and rebound damping (tested) Optional 46mm Paioli USD or 50mm Marzocchi) 0.38 kg/mm spring rate
Rear Suspension	Ohlins shock w/adjustable compression and rebound damping coupled to a rising rate linkage, 12.3" travel, 4.8 kg/mm spring rate
Front Brake	Brembo 270mm rotor
Rear Brake	Brembo 220mm rotor
Tires	Michelin Enduro Comp III tires front and rear, 90/90-21 front, 120/90-18 rear

Dimensions

Wheelbase	57.5"
Seat Height	38"
Ground Clearance	15"
Fuel Capacity	2.6 gal. stock (3.2 gal. optional)
Dry Weight	97 kg (213.4lb)
Suggested Retail Price:	\$6,200

motor hits, if traction isn't just right you're going to be spinning all over, a phenomena complicated by the stock Michelin ecology meats. There's lots of top end and over-rev too, if you're willing to hold it open. Again, we think that a pipe, silencer and perhaps even a flywheel weight could tame this beast, if that's what will suit you. Like the 125 TM, the 250E comes equipped with a similar HGS pipe with matched silencer/spark arrestor and identical Keihin PWK 38.

number plate backgrounds look a bit out of place. Subjectively speaking, we'd probably opt for a white or black replacement.

What's the bottom line to this quick taste-test? Overall the TM are hot-looking and work quite well, for stock bikes. We really have to say that as delivered they both offer an expert-only powerband, and would advise novices to test-ride the bike before plunking



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KICKING HINEY

The Connecticut Ramblers Snow Run Enduro opens another season

by Joe McLaughlin

Stafford Springs, CT 2/13

Kevin Hines skipped out of the 1999 NETRA season, spending most of the year operating a motorcycle dealership in Texas. Hines has since hung his ten-gallon hat on the rack, and put his helmet back on. At the 2000 Snow Run, he let everyone know that he's back in town. Smoking the field in what was surely one of the snowiest Snow Run events in recent history, Hines took the overall win with a ten-point cushion over 1999 series defending champ Hans Neff. Rick Claxton rounded out the top three, finishing a mere 20 seconds behind Neff.

This winter had been extremely mild by New England standards, with the temperatures well above average into early January. Mid-January brought blustery cold temps and plenty of snow. A healthy storm about ten days before the race made certain there would be lots of snow on the ground. Automotive studs were rendered useless, and only rally spikes or friction spikes would provide any hint of traction today. Even then, the thick crust of frozen snow covering six or so inches of loose, dusty powder, made the trails extremely difficult to navigate.

Moose/E-Line/Razee's Hines wasted little



Kevin Hines romped in his usual fashion, dropping 18 over the demanding course and beating his closest competition by 10 points.

time separating himself from the pack in the first section, dropping only one point, along with MSR/G&G Cycles/Factory Connection/Spectro/Renthal/MHR's Claxton. Shawn Mason and Eric McEachern followed closely with two points each. Several threes rounded out the top scores.

In the second section, Hines again set the pace, losing no time in the short, technical section. CRE/E-Line's Raffi Peterson and Moose/Razee/KTM's Neff roosted in with two points each. The following section was the end of the day for most of the C riders and anyone with mediocre tire setup. The long and sometimes rather tight ten-mile section proved to be too much at 24 mph in the snow for a large number of riders. Staying in the snow-rut was the way to fly today. Drift out of the rut, and the front tire would begin to wander aimlessly, causing more than a few surprise get-offs. Hines (9:08) set the pace, followed closely by Claxton (9:55) and Neff (9:59) sneaking in before the flip.

A short stretch of dirt road led to what normally would have been a sneaky check-in, but only Hines and Mason even made the check on time, with most

of the remaining field dropping one minute heading into the section. With no check-out, and a healthy thirty minute reset at the gas stop, anyone who hadn't already gone over their hour had ample opportunity to get back on their original minute, or at least have some time to regroup.

Only Hines and Neff were able to zero the six mile section after gas, with the rest of the faster riders losing only a point. A technical five mile section followed, which Hines again cruised through with a zero. Only Neff came close with a one-point score.

The remaining eight miles consisted of some really tight trail, divided into two sections. Hines sneaked in under the wire with a 1:59 in the first half and a 2 in the final section. McEachern's 2:58/3, followed by Jerry Madore's 3:33/3 and Neff's 3:58/3 rounded out the top scores.

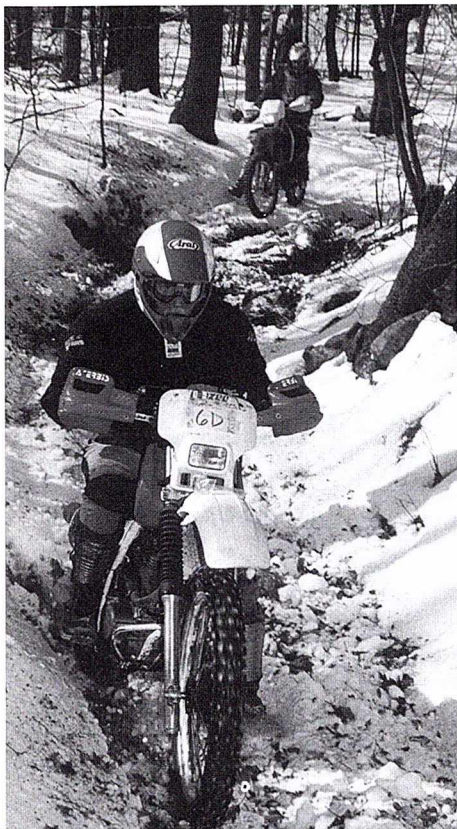
In the end, no one could come close to Hines' 18-point card. Neff's and Claxton's 28-point scores, once separated by tie-breakers placed them 2nd and 3rd overall, respectively. A-Light class rider, Eric McEachern, put in his career-best ride at 4th overall and A-High Point, with a 29. C. MacRitchie took home the B-High Point trophy on his KTM, with a very impressive 37-point day. P. Smith was the C-High Point winner,



Anthony Reo tracks down one of the more frozen trails. He finished third A Light.



It doesn't look hard, but this kind of snow gave the riders fits. Trying to keep upright in the ruts was a struggle that wore everyone out.



Bill Johnson graduated to the Super Senior class this year, and celebrated by taking the class win at the Snow Run.

Snow Run Enduro

Class Results

Overall High Point

Kevin Hines	(YZE) 18
B High Point	
C. MacRitchie	(KTM) 37
C High Point	
P. Smith	(KTM) 62 ck. 10

AA

1. H. Neff	(KTM) 28
2. R. Claxton	(CRE) 28
3. J. Madore	(Yam) 30

A Bantam

1. N. Dennett	(KTM) 41
2. K. Callahan	(KTM) 32
3. G. Trepanier	(KTM) 63

A Light

1. S. Hoginski	(CRE) 43
2. M. Nash	(CRE) 53
3. A. Reo	(KTM) 59

A Heavy

1. A. Geraci	(KTM) 33
2. J. Burns	(Hsb) 46
3. M. Zahanski	(KTM) 63

A Vet

1. K. Robbins	(Hon) 37
2. S. Fischer	(CRE) 44
3. G. Wurlitzer	(CRE) 45

A Senior

1. B. Foster	(Hon) 63
2. B. Edwards	(KTM) 65
3. R. White	(KTM) 57 ck. 11

A Four Stroke

1. J. Lis	(Hsb) 66
2. J. Simcock	(Yam) 73
3. L. Colom	(Suz) 56 ck. 7

B Bantam

1. R. Bogle	(G-G) 70 ck. 10
2. R. Galaska	(Jawa) 72 ck. 10
3. S. Cotter	(KTM) 75 ck. 10

B Light

1. F. Gaulin	(KTM) 61
2. C. Andrews	(KTM) 57 ck. 11
3. J. Ruotolu	(KTM) 74 ck. 11

B Heavy

1. D. Simone	(KTM) 73
2. J. Egan	(KTM) 70 ck. 11
3. D. Mavrs	(KTM) 61 ck. 10

B Four Stroke

1. J. Green	(Suz) 62
2. T. Hardy	(Hon) 66 ck. 10
3. G. Diedrich	(Hon) 74 ck. 10

B Veteran

1. T. Canesi	(KTM) 73
2. C. Singer	(KTM) 75 ck. 11
3. D. Boscall	(Kaw) 65 ck. 9

B Senior

1. R. Young	(KTM) 77 ck. 11
-------------	-----------------

2. R. MacIntyre	(Suz) 80 ck. 10
3. B. Stadler	(Kaw) 86 ck. 10

C Bantam

1. P. Kelly	(Yam) 67 ck. 8
2. C. Walsh	(KTM) 59 ck. 7
3. F. Kaess	(Hus) 32 ck. 2

C Light

1. F. Frey	(KXE) 72 ck. 8
2. D. Quinn	(Kaw) 58 ck. 5
3. J. Walsh	(KTM) 27 ck. 2

C Heavy

1. A. Beldotti	(KTM) 32 ck. 2
2. C. Four Stroke	
3. P. Rossi	(Hon) 60 ck. 6

C Vet

1. E. Spencer	(KTM) 72 ck. 8
2. R. Desrosiers	(Kaw) 51 ck. 4
3. M. Kearns	(KTM) 25 ck. 2

C Senior

1. B. Drapcho	(Kaw) 80 ck. 3
2. C. Kennedy	(Suz) 23 ck. 2

Super Senior

1. B. Johnson	(Hon) 64
2. K. Goodell	(CRE) 65 ck. 8
3. P. Lussier	(KTM) 21 ck. 2

Masters

1. T. Farley	(CRE) 33 ck. 2
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Women

1. S. Edwards	(Hon) 55 ck. 2
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by virtue of him being the only C-Rider to make it as far as check 10.

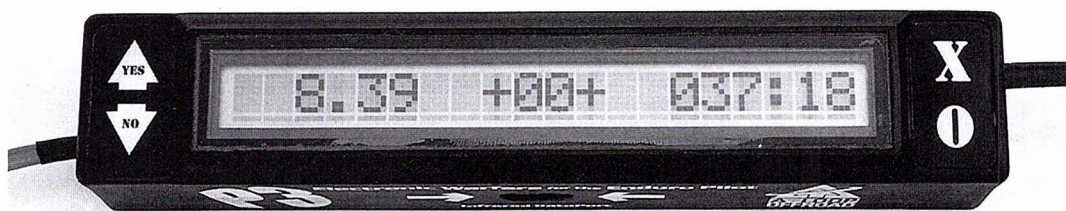
Bill Johnson introduced himself to the Super Senior class by taking the win with his 64-point score, while Tom Farley smoked the Masters class with a 33 at check 2. S. Edwards was the fastest of the ladies today, with her 55-point score at check 2 earning her the Women's class win.

"I think the key to winning today was making sure

you didn't go down," said an elated Hines. "I only went down once and only bobbled a few times. Other than that, I just kept on it all day," he added. Hines plans to contest the entire NETRA enduro series this year, along with riding a few events in the national enduro series.

The 2000 NETRA enduro season is now underway. Round two heads off to Freetown, MA, in late May for the John Monahan enduro. See you there! ★

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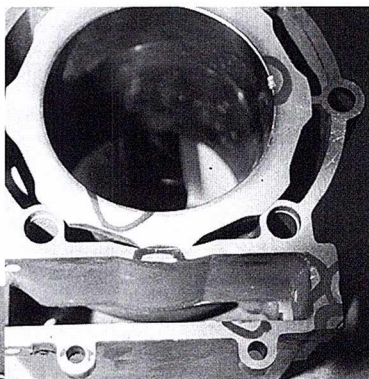
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IT'S IN THE BOX

How to pack parts for shipping and not destroy them in the process

Ordering parts and services by mail order is a boon in today's run amok, time pressured lifestyles. It's not without pitfalls, though, one of the more prevalent being problems with the actual packaging and shipping of parts. Damage during shipment is almost always a result of insufficient or improper packaging of the parts inside. This relieves the shipper of any liability, leaving you holding a potentially weighty repair bill, not to mention headaches associated with the time and hassles needed to correct the damage. Not surprisingly, the key is to package things right the first time and always err on the side of caution.

But how do I package this particular thingamajig correctly, you ask. Fact is, most shops that specialize in a specific type of repair (e.g., engine work, suspension, etc.) will know, and are more than willing to explain to you exactly how to package a particular motorcycle component, be it crank, cylinder, head, fork or whatever. All you have to do is give them a call ahead of time. Some of the better shops will even ship you the proper packaging materials and boxes to ensure that you get it right. Couldn't be simpler. Beyond that though, there are some essential yet pretty common sense rules of thumb that should be followed.



Put a cylinder loose in a box, and what happened to a badly packaged part sent to us WILL happen to you.



Filling the voids around the packaged item will be packing material, and lots of it. The packing material that fills the box is the shock absorber that prevents mishandling and other abuse from being

First order of business is choosing materials. Find a stout cardboard box, selecting one that allows sufficient space around the item to be packaged (something like four inches) for packing materials. Boxes from auto parts stores or ones made for liquor bottles are the best, the latter being preferred around the Uth household. Don't even think of using light duty cardboard like shoe boxes, pizza boxes, etc. Stick to boxes made of corrugated cardboard for their strength and shock absorbing qualities. Also before you start wrapping everything up, be advised that some shops charge extra for cleaning those parts, as much as \$25 or more.

If you don't want to be hit with this extra charge, be sure to call ahead to determine what the policy is at the shop that you're dealing with, and clean your parts first.

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Paul Clipper, Trail Rider

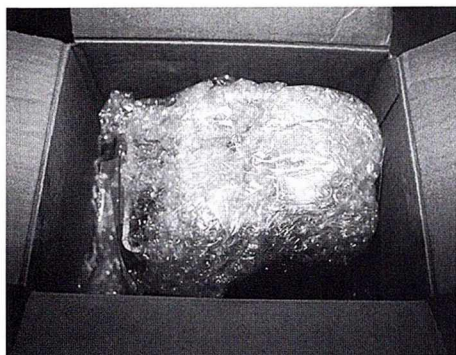
"One of the most enjoyable vacations I've ever had!" Nick Krupa, in Florida Trail Rider

"A great week! A Motorcycle Adventure and a half!" Ed Jolly, Sr. in Cycling East

"A good ride! I felt like life could not get much better, forgot about work completely. A hell of a good time, and it's not that expensive. I'll be back!" Steve Eversfield in TrailBike (England)

"Treat yourself to a vacation tour you'll never forget. Give Matt Ernst a call for the time of your life!" Southeastern Bike News

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transmitted to the part inside. Crumpled newspaper, bubble-packing and Styrofoam peanuts are all fine. Best plan is to wrap heavy metal parts with bubble wrap, using packing tape to hold it in place. Then pack the crumpled newspaper or Styrofoam peanuts around the wrapped part. Don't just set the part on the bottom of the box either. Be sure to put some packing material on the bottom of the box first, then place in the wrapped part.

If there's more than one heavy part packaged in the same box, take special care to ensure that the parts can't shift during shipment, defeat the individual wrapping and come in contact with each other. Especially vulnerable are machined surfaces (of cylinders, heads, fork tubes, etc), and threaded studs and such.

The best scheme for protecting multiple parts within the same box is using a box within a box. Each part gets wrapped and boxed, before going into the

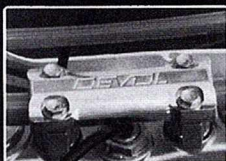
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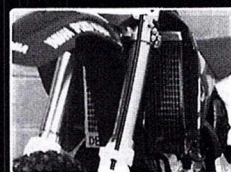
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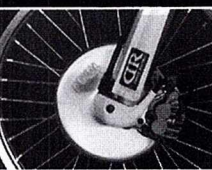
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single larger box. This all but eliminates any possibility of damage. Another method is to keep things fastened tight. When possible, leave parts bolted together, e.g., with top ends leave the head, exhaust manifold and exhaust valves bolted to the cylinder. This way no parts are lost or shift around during shipping.

Be advised that packing materials will always settle some, so be sure to cram in as much as possible, before taping the lid shut. Additionally, before sealing things up, be sure to include appropriate identification and instructions, as noted below.

Labeling and Identification

On the outside of box, include the address to be shipped to and your return address. The shipping address only needs to be written in one place, preferably on the largest uncluttered side of the package. Put the mailing address in the middle of this box face, and your return address in the upper left hand corner. I usually protect address labels or writing by laminating a couple strips of clear packing tape over them. Always enclose a note inside the box with your name and address info, telephone number, and the best time to call you. I also affix a copy of the same note on the outside of the package too. Its probably not prudent to write your credit card info on the note, lest the package fall into unscrupulous hands. Instead, just say that you want to pay by credit card and ask the shop to call you for that info.

Regarding carriers, UPS is by far the most prominent shipping service in business today. They're inexpensive, dependable and offer Internet package tracking capabilities like some of the air freight competition. Other shipping service providers include the U.S. Postal Service and various air freight delivery companies. The USPS isn't bad if you've got a small package, a habit I picked up during the UPS strike a couple of years ago. Packages that weight two pounds or less can be shipped Express Mail for a flat fee of \$3.20. Delivery is 2 to 3 days depending on distance. The USPS has other parcel post options that are priced comparably, if not slightly higher than UPS.

Fed Ex, Airborne Express, and other air cargo delivery services are as you'd expect, considerably more expensive (\$20 or more), but dependable and expeditious. Most offer overnight and two day delivery service. And, absolutely, no matter who's shipping your parts, always remember to insure the parts for their replacement value. Five hundred dollars of insurance on UPS shipped packages costs about \$4, and is well worth it in reduced anxiety. ↑

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Lasers Help Riders

What do lasers have to do with trail riding? Why should you care? If you have perfect vision, you may not need to know anything about laser surgery, but if you are one of the thousands of riders who have to wear glasses or contacts to ride, you will want to know.

If you are one of those riders, you know how frustrating glasses and contacts can be. Ever lose a contact during a race? Not fun! If you're lucky enough to find it you still have to figure out how to get the roost off of it and get it reinserted on your eye. If you get it back in you spend the rest of the ride trying to decide if it would be better to ride with it in and the feeling of a teaspoon of sand in your eye, or without it, using a white cane to finish the race.

Imagine taking on a gnarly whoops section looking through Coke bottles, or hitting a log at full speed not even knowing it was there. That's what it's like when you ride with poor vision. It is hard enough to ride most courses with perfect vision. So if you like to make your rides as frustrating and dangerous as possible, then keep taking your chances with glasses and contacts. Maybe you like feeling like you're Mr. Magoo when you ride.

If that's not your thing, you've probably wondered what it would be like to ride with perfect vision. No more oversized goggles, or expensive prescription goggles with built in lenses. No more fogging problems, lost contacts or glasses. No dents in your nose. No more burning eyes on dusty rides, or cleaning lenses. Most importantly, no more unnecessary crashes. You'll have to come up with a new excuse.

You could turn those dreams into reality, in less than 15 minutes. This is where the laser comes in. It is called an excimer laser, and the surgical procedure is called LASIK, which stands for Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis. Say that 10 times fast. The laser reshapes the cornea of your eye allowing light rays to be reflected at better angles for better focusing, which

means better vision for you.

LASIK is expected to become the most popular elective surgery performed in the new millennium. More than 1 million people have already had it done, and chances are you already know someone who has had it done. It is often referred to as having your eyes "lasered." It is highly successful in the vast majority of well-chosen patients. That means you have to be the right candidate for the surgery. It is not for everyone. The best candidates are adults whose sight is only moderately distorted, whose vision is stable (not changing) and who have no other eye problems. It is not an option for people under age 18, a slow healer, or people with diabetes or glaucoma.

Most eye doctors offer a free consultation to determine if you qualify for the procedure. Since there are no set guidelines, it is up to each physician to determine who is, or is not a candidate, and this varies. As advances continue in laser technology and long term results are studied, improvements will continue and the results will improve. By 2010, some surgeons predict, LASIK will have advanced so far that 90% of patients will see better than 20/20.

Of course, no surgery is without risks. Any responsible doctor will warn you that the desired results are not guaranteed and that certain side effects are possible. The two most common side effects are dryness, and nearly everyone experiences some glare and seeing halos at night. Both usually diminish significantly within a few months after surgery. Occasionally, the correction is incomplete and a second touch-up procedure is needed. Correction is not always to 20/20, depending on what your vision problem was to begin with. But if your vision is improved to the point of not needing glasses, I would consider that a success. Not having to cram your glasses into your goggles makes it worthwhile.

The average cost of the surgery is \$2000 per eye, and it is not covered by insurance. However most doctors will consider payment plans, and the cost can

be tax deductible. Although pricey, take heed: LASIK is not a commodity where you should shop around for the best price. You want to look for a surgeon who has done at least a thousand of them to be sure he has good experience with the procedure.

Another great thing about this procedure is that there is almost no recovery time. You could actually be out riding the very next week—without your glasses or contacts. I would absolutely recommend it to anyone who qualifies. I used to dread riding on dusty or cold days with my brother, but since he had LASIK done, we don't have to stop every 20 minutes because of some problem with his glasses or contacts.

If you're still not sure or have questions, give him a call. He will fill you in on all the details. Please don't take this as a blatant plug for my brother, but is an optometrist and his practice performs hundreds of LASIK procedures each year. He has both the patient's and doctor's perspective. I believe that if a doctor has his own procedure performed on himself, that says it all.

If you live in the Indiana, Ohio or Michigan area, he is waiting for you in Toledo, Ohio, at The Optio Laser Center. The number there is (419) 693-4444, or on the Internet at www.optio.com. He even told me if you mention this article, a hefty discount will apply.

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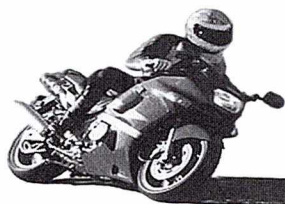



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Entry: \$30.00 pre-entry, \$35.00 post entry. Entries received after MAY 19th will be considered POST ENTRIES. Each rider will receive a #11 Route Sheet. Bring tape and scissors! Make checks payable to RORR, Inc. Mail to Reading Off Road Riders, Inc. P.O. Box 13006, Reading, PA 19612-3006.

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Requirements: All riders must have a *valid motorcycle operator's license*. All bikes must have a license plate and spark arrestor firmly attached. All bikes must have a headlight and taillight. All entrants must have a valid AMA card and an ECEA License. AMA membership can be obtained at the event (\$29 fee). ECEA license can be obtained SATURDAY MAY 27th ONLY (no fee). If you do not fulfill these requirements, you will not ride. NO REFUNDS, NO EXCUSES.

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Goody Bags

What IS a 'goody bag' you ask?

It is the bag that you might be handed at an enduro sign-up table along with your rider's packet or, more often, handed to you after you've passed the sound test. Inside the

out at Daytona's Alligator enduro and Alligator Dual-Sport; probably because manufacturers' overdosed on the giveaways on the first events of the year. The dual-sport bag, incidentally, was the only goody bag to ever include a ferry boat ticket.

ED for me for the usual consideration of the use of a gasoline credit card for two weeks.

I appreciated it but these gentlemen, honest as the day was long, NEVER gave me my goody bag! It pissed me off because that Daytona bag kept me in chain lube, matches and aspirins, even sunscreen, for the year.

So the last year that I flew down I left a day early, picked up my rider packet, put the riding number on the front headlight as instructed and fed into the sound test line. There was some drastic confusion for awhile as I inched forward in the line and dutifully revved up my engine for the sound test.

I actually had to argue with the sound test crew until I got my point across that I HAD my riding number on the headlight, HAD a motor quiet enough for the dB meter to pass, attested to by the round orange sticker also on the headlight. I WANTED my

goody bag, and might even have mentioned that it was the only REAL reason I came to Daytona, because I sure as hell didn't intend to take any TROPHYS back north.

They were not happy campers, but seeing as I was holding up the line rather nicely, they threw my goody bag onto the passenger seat of the Chevy Monte Carlo I had borrowed.

And they didn't take kindly to my suggestion to widen the snow fence lane into the sound test.

I think I still have some of those book matches in my fanny pack.

—Ed Hertfelder

Ed Hertfelder is a teller of tales and writer of books, as well as author of the globally famous Duct Tapes stories. Like to have a list of Hertfelder columns from 1986? Ask nice with a S.A.S.E. to Ed's ranch at P.O. Box 17564, Tucson, AZ 85731; or E-mail to ducttapes@yahoo.com. ↑

"Those tiny cans of WD-40 were also a favorite of mine, even if they WERE designed to go dry before you finished spraying all the door hinges on your van."

bag you might find a can of chain lube, a 10% discount on a new pair of boots, various promotional items, all of which are marvelous. Even a copy of last month's Trail Rider with a ripped cover.

In my tool box is a spark plug gap gauge that came from a goody bag along with four screwdrivers with pocket clips that are PERFECT for opening paint can lids. An exceptionally cheap enduro club might not issue a rider's packet at all, merely stuffing your peel-off riding number and score card into the goody bag, so it was wise to keep your eye on the thing until you investigated its contents.

Some good 'goodies' would be anything from Spectro, like chain lube or two stroke oil and maybe a numbered ticket to be used at a drawing at the award ceremony. The joke was that the drawing was for a ride on the big Spectro balloon, but if you weighed more than 35 pounds the thing wouldn't get off the ground. Personally I always thought shrink-wrapped aspirins were very useful, especially if you were a harried parts manager.

Those tiny cans of WD-40 were also a favorite of mine, even if they WERE designed to go dry before you finished spraying all the door hinges on your van.

The Meteor club once turned down my suggestion to include a sandwich bag holding a condom and some malted milk balls. The idea was to use the condom if you got lucky or suck up the malted milk balls to console yourself if you didn't.

They told me to sit down and play dead.

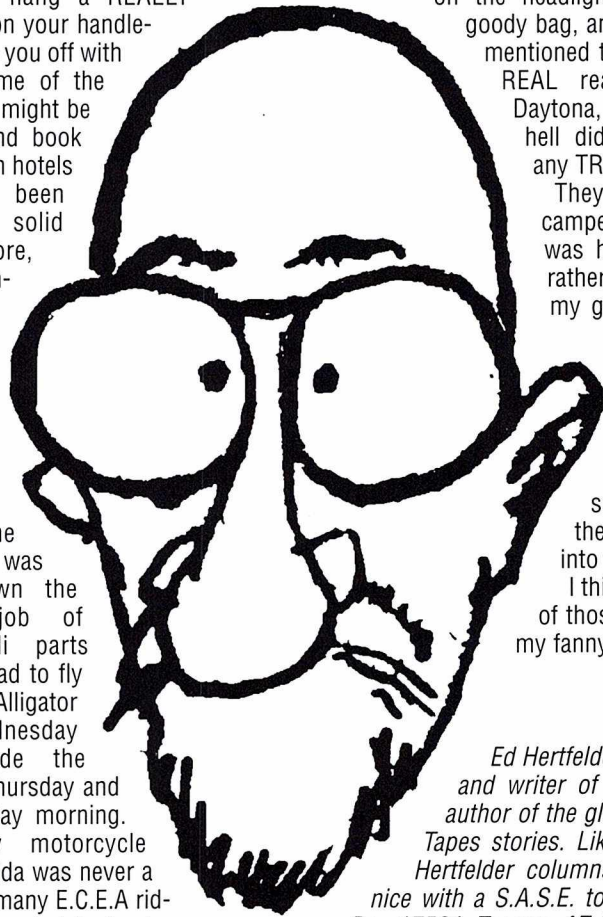
The best, by far, goody bags were passed

The Alligator enduro goody bag was always passed out as you completed the sound test.

they would hang a REALLY HEAVY bag on your handlebar and wave you off with a smile. Some of the

bag's weight might be brochures and book matches from hotels that had been booked solid months before, and the management's way of saying thanks, and some of the weight might be a Moose catalog.

During the years when I was holding down the headache job of Porsche-Audi parts manager, I had to fly down to the Alligator on Wednesday evening, ride the enduro on Thursday and fly back Friday morning. Getting my motorcycle down to Florida was never a problem. as many E.C.E.A riders would be glad to haul my motorcycle down AND GET IT SOUND TEST-



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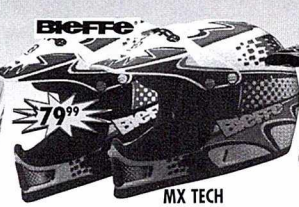
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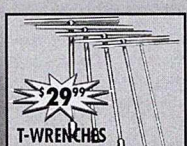
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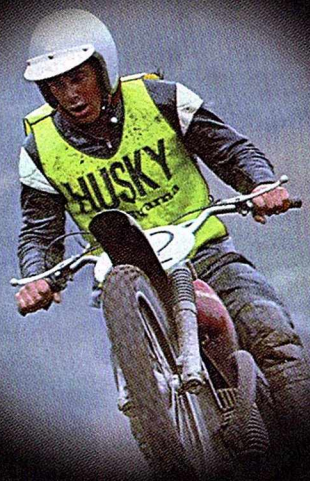
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